

The House of Representatives today passed a motion calling on the House and Senate to reach an agreement by May 28, 2010 on legislation that would place significant pressure on Iran to abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons by reducing its supply of imported gasoline. Iran currently relies heavily on gasoline from other nations to meet its demand. The House [passed](#) its version of the legislation in December and the Senate passed a similar bill the following month. The two chambers will now work to resolve the differences between the measures. This is an important step toward getting tough with Iran, but I am concerned that the Administration does not share the same focus.

Earlier this week the *New York Times* reported on a January 2010 memo in which Secretary of Defense Robert Gates expressed concern that the Obama Administration does not have a long-term plan to deal with Iran's nuclear program. The *Ti*
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quoted an Administration official as saying that the memo served "as a wake-up call." Secretary Gates subsequently sought to downplay the memo but the consequences of the Administration's inadequate strategy thus far cannot be downplayed. Indeed, the Administration unsuccessfully sought to negotiate with Iran's radical regime for over one year. The end result was the United States lost a year to get tough on Iran, while Iran had a free year to take big strides in its nuclear weapons program.

The Administration is now pursuing multi-nation sanctions against Iran but it remains unclear whether China and Russia will support crippling sanctions. Disappointedly, the Administration has worked against the sanctions bill before Congress, citing oft-repeated but unsubstantiated concerns that tough U.S. sanctions will undermine efforts to secure support for multi-nation sanctions. While I would support strong sanctions from the United Nations or a coalition of like-minded nations, and agree that such multi-nation sanctions would likely be more impactful, I believe we should not wait another day to impose the U.S. sanctions designed to restrict Iran's gasoline imports. The President's lack of support for this legislation bolsters Secretary Gates' assertion that the Administration does not have a long-term strategy to address this looming crisis. This is unacceptable. As a world leader, the United States cannot wait for other nations to take steps before focusing on our own security. It is past time for the President to demonstrate bold leadership in addressing Iran's nuclear threat by supporting the legislation pending in Congress, pursuing multi-nation sanctions without China and Russia if necessary, and making it clear that all options are on the table.